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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

The following is a digest of the most important information on the Soviet Air Force in the Soviet Zone of Germany. The data represent the status as of early December 1950.

Air Order of Battle Data.

1. The following units have been identified in the Soviet Zone of Germany as of early December 1950:

Unit	Location
Hq Twenty-Fourth Air Army	WERDER
Hq Ftr Corps	WITTENBERG
Hq Ftr Div	GROSSENHAIN
2 Ftr Regts	GROSSENHAIN
Ftr Regt	BRANDIS
Hq Ftr Div	ALT LOEWENWITZ
2 Ftr Regts	ALT LOEWENWITZ
Ftr Regt	DESSAU
Hq Ftr Div	ZERBST
2 Ftr Regts	ZERBST
Ftr Regt	BRANDENBURG-BRIEST
Hq Ftr Corps	WITTSTOCK
Hq Ftr Div	FINOW
2 Ftr Regts	FINOW
Ftr Regt	ORANIENBURG

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Hq Ftr Div	LAERZ
2 Ftr Regts	LAERZ
Ftr Regt	PARCHIM
Hq Ftr Div	FEHRBELLIN
2 Ftr Regts	FEHRBELLIN
Ftr Regt	NEUBRANDENBURG
Hq Bmr Corps	FINSTERWALDE ?
Hq Bmr Div	FINSTERWALDE
2 Bmr Regts	FINSTERWALDE (possibly one of these two regiments is in DRESDEN-KLOTZSCHE)
Bmr Regt	COTTBUS
Hq Bmr Div	WERNEUCHEN
2 Bmr Regts	WERNEUCHEN
Bmr Regt	STRAUSBERG
Hq GA Corps	FALKENSEE
Hq GA Div	DOEBERITZ
664th GA Regt	DOEBERITZ
710th GA Regt	DOEBERITZ
830th GA Regt	SCHOENWALDE
Hq GA Div	JUETERBOG ?
2 GA Regts	JUETERBOG-ALTES LAGER
GA Regt	KOETHEN
Rcn Regt	KOETHEN (only ground attack aircraft of regiment) and PARCHIM (only the twin-engine aircraft of regiment)
Rcn Regt	SCHOENWALDE
Trans Regt	ALTENBURG
Trans Regt	STAAKEN

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2. The following aircraft have been identified as being in use with air units:

a. Fighter Regiments.

All fighter regiments were about 80 percent reequipped with type Mig-15 aircraft, an average of 34 jet aircraft are thus available to each individual regiment. The conventional aircraft formerly used were shipped out of the Soviet Zone of Germany, some of them by rail. 50X1-HUM [redacted] they were either sent to pilot schools in the U.S.S.R. or that they possibly were delivered to satellite states. Only a few conventional fighter aircraft of the La-9 or the Yak-9 type are still in use with the fighter regiments. In addition to these planes, each fighter regiment is equipped with a varying number of Po-2 and Yak-11 trainers and one type 16 jet plane. Each fighter regiment is composed of three squadrons of 16 planes each, in addition to a leading flight of four planes. The total authorized strength of a fighter regiment is therefore 52 aircraft. With regard to equipment and personnel, it appears that all fighter regiments meet T/O&E requirements.

b. Bomber Regiments.

The bomber regiments are still equipped with Pe-2 aircraft. A new version of this type has been observed with all bomber regiments. The new version, the type designation of which is unknown, differs from the conventional figuration in its cockpit enclosures. In contrast to the old version, the new one has two such enclosures, the rear hood being higher than the front hood. Nothing is known about the reason for this modification. There is a possibility that the figuration of the canopy was redesigned with a view toward giving crew members in the rear visibility forward. The Pe-2s in use with the individual regiments also differ with regard to their noses, some of the aircraft having noses with plexiglass bottoms, while others are fitted with all-metal noses. It is believed that the latter craft drop their bombs at a signal from their formation leader, while those fitted with a plexiglass nose are equipped with a bomb sight. Four-engine aircraft have not been observed. A bomber regiment appears to be composed of three squadrons of 12 planes each and a leading flight of three planes, which make a total of 39 aircraft.

c. Ground Attack Regiments.

The ground attack regiments are equipped with IL-10 type aircraft. In addition to the IL-10s, some obsolete IL-2s seem to be available to each ground attack regiment, probably for training purposes. There are no indications of any intended reequipment with jet planes. A ground attack regiment is composed of four squadrons of 12 planes each and a leading flight of four aircraft. The authorized strength thus is 52 planes.

d. Reconnaissance Regiments.

The reconnaissance regiments are not uniformly equipped. The reconnaissance regiment located in KOETHEN and PARCHIM is equipped with IL-10 and A-20 aircraft. The fighters formerly available to this regiment have not been observed recently. The reconnaissance regiment in SCHWERINMALDE, on the other hand, is equipped with Pe-2 and Tu-2 type aircraft. It is believed that the regiment stationed in KOETHEN and

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PARCHIM is assigned combat reconnaissance missions while the regiment in SCHOENWALDE would have to perform reconnaissance missions in the rear area of operations. The small number of air reconnaissance units assigned to the air army suggests that, in principle, the fighter, ground attack, and bomber units must perform their own reconnaissance. The two reconnaissance regiments are believed to be at the disposal of the Air Army Headquarters for special reconnaissance missions. To date there has been no indication that these reconnaissance regiments are subordinate to any air corps or air division. The authorized strength of the reconnaissance regiments is not known. They are presumably composed of three squadrons, each of which is uniformly equipped with aircraft.

e. Air Transport Regiments.

The air transport regiment in ALTENBURG is equipped with Li-2 and lend-lease C-47 aircraft. It is composed of three squadrons of 12 planes each. The air transport regiment in STAAKEN is equipped with IL-12, Li-2, and C-47 aircraft.

Aircraft and Personnel Strength of the Twenty-Fourth Air Army.

3. The observation of airfields during recent months provides the basis for a general survey of the number of aircraft. (2) However, only about half of the total number of aircraft were counted. This is due to the fact that the **Russians** exert every effort not to display all of the planes stationed at a field at the same time. As far as available facilities permit, the aircraft are kept in hangars or camouflaged revetments prior to, and after, flying. This fact must be taken into consideration in evaluating reports on aircraft stationed at any specific field. [redacted] 50X1-HUM

[redacted] The aircraft strength is believed to be as follows:

Unit	Total A/C
6 fighter division headquarters, equipped with 2 a/c each	12
18 fighter regiments, equipped with 52 a/c each	936
2 bomber division headquarters, equipped with 3 a/c each	6
6 bomber regiments, equipped with 39 a/c each	234
2 ground attack division headquarters, equipped with 2 a/c each	4
6 ground attack regiments, equipped with 52 a/c each	312
1 reconnaissance regiment	40
1 reconnaissance regiment	30
2 transport regiments, equipped with 36 a/c each	72

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Total number of aircraft in use with tactical units 1,646.

Not included in this number are the courier planes, usually Po-2s, and trainers such as type 16 jet aircraft, Po-2s, Yak-12s, etc., which are assigned to each regiment, the total number of which is estimated at about 200. Assuming that 80 percent of the conventional fighter aircraft were exchanged for Mig-15 type jet planes, the total of these planes is estimated at about 750. This number is probably not excessive, a belief which is strenghtened by the fact that very few conventional fighters are still stationed at the individual fields.

4. No authorized or actual personnel strengths of units are known. In most cases, the strength requirements **in force** at the end of World War II no longer apply. The modernization of the Soviet Air Force brought about by re-equipment with new types of **aircraft** and the improvement of the aircraft reporting service, necessarily led to a reorganization of the individual units. From 10 to 20 percent more flying personnel than would be required, on the basis of the number of aircraft available to each regiment, seem to be assigned to the individual air regiments. The present ratio of aircraft to personnel is believed to be about 1 to 20, which would result in a personnel strength of about 33,000 men for the Twenty-Fourth Air Army.

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Improvement of Airfields.

8. Due to limited size almost none of the German airfields taken over by the Soviets at the end of the war were suitable for jet aircraft types now used by the Soviet Air Force. The Soviets were therefore forced to enlarge these fields. The progress of this airfield construction work, made from 1948 to 1950, has been charted. (7) The data contained in this chart show the following:

a. In 1948 there were two airfields with concrete runways more than 2,000 meters long.

b. In 1940/1949 another 11 fields were expanded and provided with runways longer than 2,000 meters.

c. In 1949/1950 seven more fields were improved in this manner. Since the fall of 1950 work on the improvement of another six airfields has been in progress. This work is not scheduled to be completed prior to the summer of 1951. The fields concerned are located in PUETNITZ, WERNEUCHEN, MERSEBURG, ERFURT-BINDERSLEBEN, PERLEBERG, and WELZOW. This indicates that the Soviets now have available 20 fields with runways longer than 2,000 meters in their zone. It can be expected that this number will rise to at least 26 by the summer of 1951. The enlargement of the airfields made it possible to station all fighter units at suitable installations. Except for NEURUPPIN and WITTSTOCK, all of the improved airfields are now occupied by air units. The improvement of additional airfields may serve the following purposes:

   a. To create facilities to receive additional units transferred to the Soviet Zone of Germany.

   b. To establish alternate airfields for the units already stationed in Germany to be used in the event of war.

   c. To reduce the occupation of other airfields which are presently occupied by two regiments, so that eventually three improved fields will be available for each fighter division.

Of the three possibilities mentioned above, that under "c" appears to be the most probable. There is a possibility that the individual fighter divisions will be allocated the following additional installations:

Fighter division in PEENEMUENDE and NEUBRANDENBURG: Puetnitz airfield

Fighter division in LAERZ and PARCHIM: Wittstock airfield

Fighter division in FINOW and ORANIENBURG: Neuruppin airfield

Fighter division in ZERBST and BRANDENBURG: Perleberg airfield

Fighter division in DESSAU and ALT LOEMNITZ: Merseburg airfield

Fighter division in GROSSENHAIN and BRANDIS: Erfurt-Bindersleben airfield.

On the basis of this hypothesis, the Soviets would bring about a rather even distribution of their fighter units over the entire western area of their occupation zone. With regard to the air defense system the individual fighter divisions may be assigned the following missions:

Fighter division in PEENEMUENDE: Protection against penetration via the Baltic Sea.

Fighter division in LAERZ: Protection against penetration via MECKLENBURG.

Fighter division in FINOW: Protection of the rear area, simultaneously a reserve.

Fighter division in ZERBST: Protection against penetration from the west in the central sector.

Fighter division in ALT LOEMNITZ: Protection against penetration from the southwest.

Fighter division in GROSS HAIN: Protection against penetration from the south.

The enlargement of airfields presently occupied by ground attack and light bomber units may be taken as an indication of intended reequipment of these units with more modern aircraft. In addition to the 26 improved airfields mentioned there are 37 other airfields in the Soviet Zone of Germany which are unoccupied but serviceable and have landing fields of more than 1,000 meters. All these fields could be made serviceable on short notice for occupation by units equipped with conventional types of aircraft.

Night and All-Weather Landing Facilities.

9. The systematic installation of lighting facilities was started in 1950. This work is completed at most of the fields occupied by fighter units. It is not yet clear whether similar facilities were installed at the other airfields. At one field, lighting of the approach lane, lighting of the landing strip, and obstacle lights were observed. The approach lane lying in the extension of the surface runway is marked by searchlights, the most distant of which is at a point about 1,000 meters from the end of the runway. The searchlights are posted 80 to 100 meters apart, their beams being directed upward to meet the landing plane. Eight searchlights are set up side by side at the edge of the landing field. They illuminate the runway and a strip on both sides of it. The beginning of the runway is marked by red lamps set up in a line at a right angle to the landing direction. The touch-ground point is marked by two green lamps set up on both sides of the runway. The stretch from this point as far as the end of the runway is marked by lamps installed on both sides of the runway. The end of the runway is marked by red lamps. One or several searchlights are also set up there. It is believed that these searchlights serve to light the landing strip and the landing field for the landing aircraft. All obstacles in the vicinity of the airfield are marked by red lamps.

10. It has been observed recently that radio towers were being set up outside the landing field but exactly in-line with the surfaced runway at almost all fields occupied by fighter units. From this observation and the fact that the distance of the two radio beacons from the beginning of the runway is approximately the same at all airfields, it seems that these radio installations are beacons for all-weather landing. (8) The distance between the outer beacon and the beginning of the runway is about 4,000 meters, that of the inner beacon about 1,000 meters. The beacons consist of a radio tower, 6 to 8 meters high, braced on all sides, and a radio truck. The two radio beacons are interconnected by a wire line, and they are also connected to the airfield by such a line. No information is available concerning the frequencies used by the radio beacons and their methods of operation. However, it is believed that these beacons function along the lines of the radio approach system. In addition to these radio beacons many airfields have radio stations composed of four radio towers interconnected by antennas. These radio stations are believed to be either radio transmitters or, more probably, radio beams. There is a possibility that these radio beams transmit a signal which enables the pilot to identify the airfield concerned and thus either to take his bearings or to approach the field. After flying over this type of radio beam, the plane will then be able to make its landing by means of the two other beacons. However, it must be stated that this is only a conjecture, the correctness of which is not confirmed.

11. Adcock DF stations have been observed in the vicinity of several airfields. They have four towers which are not interconnected by antennas, and a cabin or tent from which an antenna rod, located in the center of these towers, projects. This short antenna rod is probably the sense direction finding antenna used for such determination. It is not yet clear whether each airfield is provided with such an Adcock DF station.

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12. Two different types of radar sets were observed during the last twelve months. Their outward appearance differs inasmuch as the one is mounted on a truck and has an antenna consisting of a horizontal metal rod with seven dipoles, while the other radar set is characterized by its two rotatable ears. No information is available on the specific functions of these two types of sets. The radar set fitted with two ears was only observed near airfields at, or near which, a fighter division or fighter corps headquarters is located. The only exception to this is the radar set at Cottbus airfield. From this observation it is inferred that this type of set is being used by fighter division or corps headquarters for the control of fighter aircraft and for the spotting of enemy planes. From photographs obtained it was possible to calculate the length of the dipoles and thus to determine the frequency used by these sets. This frequency is 4 to 4.2 meters. Details on the tactical employment of these sets are not available. The number of these sets available to the division or fighter corps headquarters is believed to be so small that a complete coverage of the entire air space of the Twenty-Fourth Air Army is not guaranteed. It is therefore assumed that aircraft observation missions are also assigned to Soviet AAA units.

Status of Training.

13. During the past summer and fall, training activities of fighter units were chiefly concerned with the retraining of pilots with the Mig-15. This training was observed with all fighter regiments, which indicates that it was ordered by the Twenty-Fourth Air Army. The following training activities were observed:

a. Local flights in order to practice take-offs and landings.

b. Formation flying in groups of two, in flights, and in squadron and regiment formation.

c. Firing at ground targets, low-level attacks, and diving attacks.

d. Air combat.

e. High-altitude flights up to 11,000 meters.

f. Individual night landings.

g. Night flights and night landings in formations.

During the fall maneuvers, cooperation with ground attack and bomber units, as well as with army units and the air defense system was practiced. The meager information available on this type of training indicates that possibly the control and direction of the formations aloft from the ground did not meet with difficulties. In no case was it observed that a formation was not successfully directed to its assigned air or ground target. The degree to which Soviet fighter units are in a position to employ entire formations under unfavorable weather conditions cannot be judged. However, with regard to the current modernization of the Soviet Air Force, it must not be assumed that the Soviets are incapable of employing fighter formations in all weather.

14. Ground attack units practiced firing at ground targets, and bomb release. For the most part these exercises were conducted day and night by individual planes and by entire formations. During the 1950 fall maneuvers, the units held exercises on regimental, division, and corps level and, escorted by fighters, practiced close support of army units. New methods and means of attack were not reported.

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15. Very little information is available on training activities of the bomber units. Previous information remains unchanged.

16. The training activities of the air transport regiment stationed in ALTENBURG were continually observed. The regiment was chiefly employed for the transport of army units in THURINGIA and for the dropping of both parachutists and equipment and supplies. It appears that the regiment is being particularly trained for air transport of army units. No reports have been received on the training of the air transport regiment stationed in STAAKEN.

17. The reconnaissance regiment stationed in KOETHEN, after being temporarily transferred to STENDAL, was observed only conducting artillery missions and reconnaissance flights against army units. No information was obtained on the training activities of the reconnaissance regiment located in SCHOENWALDE. Observations made indicate that this regiment cooperates closely with bomber units.

Overall Estimate.

18. By the reequipment of the fighter units with jet aircraft which, regarding their performance, are not inferior to the types presently in use in Western Europe, and by the improvement of the ground organizations and the establishment of a modern fighter control system, the efficiency of the fighter units of the Twenty-Fourth Air Army has increased considerably during the last year. The ground attack and bomber units do not seem to have made similar progress. The main efforts at modernizing the Twenty-Fourth Air Army during the last year were thus centered on the fighter units, which, as before, are assigned the two missions of defending air space by fighting enemy aircraft, and rendering close support to ground troops by attacking ground targets.

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